DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 696 CS 508 815

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TITLE African American and Afrocentric Communication Courses: A Rationale.
PUB DATE Feb 95
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western States Communication Association (Portland, OR, February 10-14, 1995).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Asian Americans; Black Culture; *Black Students; College Students; Cultural Context; Cultural Differences; *Curriculum Evaluation; Higher Education; *Minority Groups; *Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS *African Americans; Communication Context; *Discourse Communities

ABSTRACT

One of the main problems with higher education is that curriculums, both past and present, objectify and marginalize the experiences of people of color and thus reduce diversity in the graduate and professional school populations. African American, Asians, Hispanics, and other minorities are studied in many college-level classes only as an afterthought. To rectify this situation, courses in African-American communication should be taught in speech communication departments and colleges and universities in this country. Courses at both the undergraduate and graduate level in African American public discourse would provide students with an opportunity to become acquainted with the public discourse that grows out of the traditions of the African-American community and is guided by principles generated in African black speech communities. A pivotal notion undergirding these courses would be that all public discourse is culture specific. Some of the reasons such a course should be taught are as follows: (1) no study of communication is complete unless it considers communication that is not of European descent; (2) an African-American perspective seldom exists in communication departments; (3) the course would equip students with additional skills of critical thinking in communication because it would force them to recognize that communication occurs in particular cultural contexts, between particular speakers and listeners. Such courses would facilitate the understanding that African-American discourse can be described not only in terms of style but also in terms of motive, content and sources of knowledge. (Contains two appendixes of course materials, including reading lists, syllabi and course guidelines.) (TB)

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ED 379 696

African American and Afrocentric Communication Courses
A Rationale

Abstract

This author explores several issues inherent in the experience of the "ethnic student" in predominately white institutions of higher education. Those issues include the alienating consequences of the Eurocentric curriculum on students of colour, the nature of ethnicity, who belongs to an ethnic group, and the role of ethnic communication studies in the speech communication curriculum. The author posited the notion that what is currently referred to as "human or speech communication" is actually Eurocentric communication. The author suggests that rather than exalting Eurocentric communication theory to a "universal" and relegating Afrocentric and Asiocentric communication theories to the periphery of study as tangential after thoughts, Eurocentric communication theory should be studied as only one of four communication theory frameworks. To that end this paper outlines a rationale for the study of Afrocentric communication theory and practices with undergraduate and graduate course proposals included.

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CS508815

Paper presented at the Annual Western States Communication Association convention in Portland, Oregon, 1995.

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This author explores several issues inherent in the experience of the "ethnic student" in predominately white institutions of higher education. Those issues include the alienating consequences of the Eurocentric curriculum on students of colour, the nature of ethnicity, who belongs to an ethnic group, and the role of ethnic communication studies in the speech communication curriculum. The author posited the notion that what is currently referred to as "human or speech communication" is actually Eurocentric communication. The author suggests that rather than exalting Eurocentric communication theory to a "universal" and relegating Afrocentric and Asiocentric communication theories to the periphery of study as tangential after thoughts, Eurocentric communication theory should be studied as only one of four communication theory frameworks. To that end this paper outlines a rationale for the study of Afrocentric communication theory and practices with undergraduate and graduate course proposals included.

Introduction

It seems like only a few short years ago that I embarked on what was to be a ten year odyssey in higher education. It was an experience that was both exhilarating and demoralizing; motivational yet oppressive; instructional while invalidating. These very polarizing experiences were due to the nature of the curriculum and the attitudes of instructors. No matter the area of study Music, Speech, Theater, Education, or English, Black Americans were either not there, had life experiences that did not fit the paradigms, or were represented as inferior. Thus my successful matriculation through the academy was accomplished in spite of the

dehumanizing, objectifying experiences extolled as education. Let me share just a few of the experiences that spanned across my major, minor, and teacher methods courses.

My goal to be a music major based on my precollegiate experiences. These included ten years of classical piano lessons, eight years of school choir including concert and the elite acappella choir, twelve years of church choir, five years as church pianist, and a year of music theory as a high school senior. While all of my formal training was in European sacred and secular music, my community training was in black gospel, Negro spirituals and rhythm and blues.

There was nothing for me in the music department. Stripped of my family and home community I suddenly became aware that this music had nothing to do with my life experiences nor the creative expressions of my people. For my first voice jury I was required to perform a song in German. I did not understand one word of the song and delivered the lyrics with a heavy southern black accent. I learned music by Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart, but no Dorsey, Ellington, or Joplin. I had to leave my "blackness" behind in order to be successful. After two semesters of this I was spiritually depleted and suffering from clinical depression so I changed my major to Speech and Theater Education.

Here the formal classroom experiences were no better, but I found myself able to apply more of the information to my own experiences. However, no course was offered in African American communication, not even Black Rhetoric. I was in the master's program before I became aware of a black speech professional. I stumbled upon a book by Arthur L. Smith (Molefi Asante) with his picture on the inside jacket and only then was I sure that as a black person in speech I was not alone.

A cursory glance at my theater courses would have indicated that there was only one heritage in theater and that was European. This European heritage grew out of the Greek tradition and that heritage sprang full grown from the Greek experience. Apparently Afrocentric, Asiocentric and Latino peoples had no theatrical traditions or legacies. When I took the Stage Make-Up class I was the first black student on my campus to do so. The instructor, who had a Ph.D. in Dramatic Arts, had never had a black student. There were no make-up supplies for me, no pan-cake, no setting powder in my shade. I finished as many assignments as possible without the appropriate tools and at the end of the semester the teacher said, "Marquita, thanks for letting me experiment with your face". Needless to say this was not a validating experience.

African Americans were completely absent from my

English courses and this was my minor. My courses included Modern British Fiction, Early American Literature, and Shakespeare; no Huges, Hurston, Walker, Giovvani, or Dunbar.

Not only did the course work deny my existence and invalidate my experiences, but the content also indicated that blacks were inferior. How startled I was to learn from my Tests and Measurements text that I wasn't supposed to be able to function well in college. According to the text and instructor this was because early I.Q. testing conducted by the military indicated that whites had higher I.Q.s than Negroes. The exception was for northern Negroes and southern whites, where this relationship was reversed, according to the military, no doubt due only to the superior northern education. Here was so called evidence that I was not able or expected to function on par with my classmates.

The basic problem is that past and present curriculums guiding higher education objectify and marginalize the experiences of people of colour, thus reducing diversity in the graduate and professional school populations.

Asante (1993) suggests that objectification occurs when a group of people are studied as an after thought. Here is an example: in an interpersonal course the instructor discusses courtship behavior "in general" and

then says, "Oh, by the way this is how black people do it or here is how Koreans do it". This type of discussion denies the creative and generative functions of blacks and Koreans as communicants.

The marginalization of experiences can be the result several factors. One factor is course work that is offered, but for most students cannot be used towards graduation credits, i.e. diversity courses that are not in the general education sequence or in majors. Taking such courses would require students to prolong their college careers, so many don't. Marginalization can also occur as a consequence of labelling an area of study as "ethnic". This will be discussed in further detail in an upcoming section.

The lack of diversity among post bachelor trained professionals can be proven with the following figures. World wide people of European descent make up only one-fourth of the population which means that the majority of the people in the world are of African, Asian, indigenous tribal descent or some combination of these four groups. According to figures from the 1990 U.S. census the American population was 12% African Americans, 3% Asians, 76% Euro-Americans, and 9% Latinos ("The Numbers Game," 1993 14-15). Based on population trends the American population will be 14% African American, 6% Asian and Pacific Islanders, 69% Euro-American, and 11% Latino by

2010. In 2050 the breakdown is projected to be 16% African American, 10% Asian, 52% Euro-American, and 22% Latino ("The Numbers Game," 1993 14-15).

> By 2056, when someone born today will be 66 years old, the "average" U.S. resident, as defined by the Census statistics, will trace his or her descent to Africa, Asia, the Hispanic world, the Pacific Islands, Arabia---almost anywhere but White Europe. ("The Browning...", 1990 2)

Now let's take a look at the demographics of one professional organization, the Speech Communication Association (SCA). According to the latest SCA figures the Association membership is at 7,000. Of the 7,000 members there are about 410 African Americans (6%), 300 Asians (4%), 6140 Euro-Americans (88%), and 150 Latinos (2%) (SCA 1995). In each case people of colour are in lower percentages in SCA than they are in the general population. African Americans are 6% less than in the overall population, Asian Americans 2% less, and Latinos 7% less. Unfortunately the curriculums that are now in place are not likely to attract more students of colour to graduate school in general or graduate work in speech communication in particular.

One might guess and hope that things have changed in the almost three decades since I was a freshman. Actually things have changed with more diverse faculties and the inclusion of ethnic departments and courses. However, the African American college student must still labor under oppressive conditions created by comments such as those

made by Francis Lawrence, the president of Rutgers, at a November 1994 faculty meeting.

> The average SAT for African Americans is 750...Do we set standards in the future so we don't admit anybody with the national test? Or do we deal with a disadvantaged population that doesn't have that genetic, hereditary background to have a higher average? (Russakoff 1995 5A)

Based on this statement and similar ones made in controversial books like Herrnstein & Murray's (1994) The Bell Curve:Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life things haven't changed much at all.

The Nature of the Ethnic Concept

Universities restructured to include departments of Ethnic Studies and curriculums that incorporate ethnic courses could to some extent ameliorate the problems of curricular racism in higher education. However, the term ethnic, in it's current use is problematic in itself. As scholars struggle to define the study of phenomenon among people who are not of European descent they are always in peril of stepping from one loaded term to another.

For instance in my early writings I referred to people other than Europeans as "minorities". But as I became aware of the fact that Eurocentric people represent only one fourth of the world's population I realized that minority was a misnomer. In the late 70's I began to use non-white, but quickly abandoned it because the term is negative and implies that the standard is white. Furthermore the white-non-white

dichotomy is a highly polarized manner of describing humanity.

Presently, I use the term people of colour. This term is not new; W.E.B. Dubois used it in his book The Souls of Black Folk. I prefer this because people of colour are the majority of the people of the world. However, all people have pigment including people of European descent. Therefore people of colour in the broadest sense includes everyone.

Label appropriateness in the General Semantic sense is also the issue with the term ethnic. According to Webster's Unabridged Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language the word ethnic can be traced to Latin and originally meant a person who was neither Christian nor Jew. Other words synonymous with ethnic were heathen and primitive. In more recent history ethnic has come to mean the origins, classification, and characteristics of a group (Roosens 1989). Ethnicity includes the language, religions, traditions, world views, and patterns of thinking of a group (Mager 1985). Race and ethnicity are not interchangeable terms in that ethnicity is learned and race is genetically fixed into a population. Ethnicity can be lost or dropped biological race cannot.

Not only has ethnic historically been a derogatory concept, but it is also a politically loaded term. Around the world ethnic tends to mean those people who

are not in power. Power dominant people (those people who control the main institutions) claim that they do not have ethnicity. But if this were true then they would have no common language, religion, traditions, world view, and patterns of thinking. Power dominant people propagate the notion that their way is "the culture" and that people who do not belong to their culture or do not look like them have no culture, are heathens, primitive, and/or exotic.

While most communicators are not aware of earlier interpretations of the word ethnic, the use of it is fraught with the notions of disenfranchisement and marginalization. Therefore the use of departmental and course titles such as ethnic studies and ethnic communication implies the study of people who are disenfranchised, marginalized, and primitive. From the beginning of its use the term ethnic divided people into us and them and was used in an oppressive manner.

In the Spring of 1994 a group of students put before the Academic Senate at San Jose State University a resolution that every student take a course in ethnic diversity for the purpose of learning about people of colour. While the resolution was voted down a committee was formed to study the issue. In their first report to the Senate the chairman of the committee stated that they spent a great deal of time deciding "who has ethnicity".

But when current definitions of the word ethnic are used all groups of people have it including power dominant people and/or people of European descent. I maintain that all tributary cultures in the U.S. should be about reclaiming and reconstructing their ethnic heritages in order that they might enter into the current public dialogue about unity-diversity issues and American identity.

Educators and students alike might accrue greater advantages from curriculums and courses that are Afrocentric, Asiocentric, Eurocentric, Latino or a mixture of these umbrella cultures. The diversity of cultures that exist today stems from the various umbrella cultures, combinations of them, the geography and religions of the people, population and cultural fusion, political systems, economic conditions, colonization, and oppression. For example the label Hispanic was coined by the U.S. government to group people with Spanish surnames or who spoke Spanish as a first language. This was done around 1960. But people from Spain who fit both of these criteria list themselves as European. Apparently Hispanic refers only to people who were colonized and oppressed by Spain in the New World. This colonization and oppression of indigenous tribal people in the New World gave rise to what is now referred to as Hispanic culture.

While it would be impossible to have courses about

every group it is possible to have courses that facilitate the study of the four umbrella cultures/ speech communities. Therefore I propose curriculums that take into account the quartet of cultures, meaning the four basic, equally important cultures of African, Asian, European and Latino heritage or any combination of the four.

I believe that ultimately providing course work that is ethno-identified would attract more students of colour to the field of communication and graduate school and would provide all students with a broader education. This in turn would ensure that more scholars of colour enter the ranks of the profession and that scholars of European descent have the ehnic literacy necessary to teach and conduct research in a multicultural world. To this end I have developed both an undergraduate course in African American Public Discourse and a graduate seminar in Afrocentric Communication.

The Nature of Afrocentric Scholarship and Communication

Afrocentric communication refers to communication principles, methods, and subjects generated from speech communities comprised of people of African descent or the African diaspora. According to Molefi Asante, Afrocentric study and scholarship involves the exploration and examination of African phenomena from the standpoint of Africans as human agents, as subjects rather than objects

(1993). Asante suggests that there are three paradigmatic approaches to the study of Afrocentric phenomena. The first is functional, which represents needs, policy, and action orientations. The second is categorical, which revolves around schemes, gender, class, and themes. Etymological is the third paradigm and deals with language, literature, and oratures (Asante 1993 110).

Semmes in Cultural Hegemony and African American Development (1992) writes that Afrocentric philosophy and thought can be categorized into three basic themes: survival & development; ideals & values for behavior and; vindicative. These visions of Afrocentric study, scholarship and themes guide the following course proposals in African American Public discourse and African American Communication.

Purpose of Course in African American Public Discourse

A course in African American public discourse (Appendix A) would provide students with an opportunity to become acquainted with the public discourse that grows out of the traditions of the Afro-American community and is guided by principles generated in African black speech communittees. A pivotal notion undergirding the course would be that all public discourse is culture specific. Based on this premise it is logical to conclude that Eurocentric rhetorical theory does not and cannot define the purposes, generate the principles, nor provide the

critical tools necessary to participate in and/or understand the public discourse of other cultures.

Rational for Inclusion in Curriculum

Afro-American public communication is being proposed as an addition to the curriculum of the academy for several reasons. First, no study of the humanities or social sciences can be complete without courses that deal with all people as communication agents, not just those of European descent. No society can be understood without understanding the discourse of the people.

Secondly not only is an Afrocentric perspective on communication absent from many African-American Studies departments, such a perspective seldom exists in most communication departments across the country. In a system of higher education struggling to prepare students to understand and participate in a multicultural domestic arena and a highly diverse global village this is an oversight which must be corrected.

While a few instructors throughout the academy may include a unit or lecture about black rhetoric this is not a sufficient study of the phenomena. To study Afrocentric public communication as an object on the periphery of Eurocentric rhetoric is to do a disservice to the subject. Here is a third reason for including such a course in the curriculum.

A fourth reason for including the proposed course is

because it is important for all members of the academy (faculty and students) to understand that effective public discourse cannot be limited to Eurocentric canons of rhetoric. Public discourse cannot be judged effectively without taking into consideration both the speaker and audience as a products of specific speech communities with traditions and communication principles growing out of those communities. As a speaker comes to the arena she should not be forced to completely divest herself of her cultural identity, her culture's ways of knowing; nor her culture's types of reasoning in order to be judged successful.

This course would lift up for discussion and study not only an African American perspective on public discourse, but it would also equip the students with additional critical thinking, listening and analytical skills. This is a fifth reason for including Afro-American public discourse in the curriculum. Rather than working from a reductionist model which posits that there is only one way to be a good public speaker and therefore propagating discourse rigidity, this course would, by its very existence, suggest an additive model which fosters discourse flexibility.

The last justification for adding the course proposed here is that members of the academic and lay communities must realize that black rhetors span a

continuum of Afrocentric styles from Malcolm X and Fannie Lou Hamer to Martin Luther King Jr. and Barbara Jordon to Clarence Thomas and Colin Powell. This course would facilitate the understanding that Afrocentric discourse can be described not only in terms of style, but also in terms of motive, content and sources of knowledge.

Course Description

A theory and performance based course in public communication grounded in discourse principles generated in the African American community. Poetic discourse, ceremonial events, storytelling, vindicative, empowering, religious, rap, and revolutionary speaking will be the focus.

Purpose of Seminar in African American Communication

This seminar (Appendix B) would provide graduate students from Communication Studies, African American studies, Education, Social Work, Administration of Justice, Hospitality Management, Business and those seeking English As Secondl Language certification an opportunity to become acquainted with the theory of Afrocentricity and the practice of African American communication across contexts. Primarily the students would study African American communication ranging from interpersonal to public discourse to mass communication. However, this would not exclude the inclusion of communication practices of Africans from other continents

such as Africa or other countries including, England, Brazil and the Philippines. The principal notion undergirding the seminar would be that all communication is culture specific. Based on this premise it is logical to conclude that in order to understand the communication practices and theories of African American people the subject matter should be studied as a central focus of the course rather than on the periphery of a course on Eurocentric communication.

Rational for Inclusion in the Curriculum

African American communication is being proposed as an addition to the university graduate program for several reasons. First, we live in a country where the majority is changing. Specifically, the population is "browning." Though the national population is browning many Communication Studies departments continue to center on Eurocentric communication practices and theories. While several communication departments have an excellent infusion of courses on culture and intercultural communication, they have yet to build courses around cultures other than Eurocentric.

In order to have a truly intercultural/ multicultural perspective and curriculum members of the academy must provide courses that center on cultures other than Eurocentric as the center of the course not an add on unit. Most communication courses with the

exception of the culture, multicultural and intercultural courses focus on Eurocentric communication. A course on African American communication would enable communication departments to move closer to the goal of intercultural infusion of the curriculum.

Course Description

A theory based course designed to acquaint students with African American communication across contexts including interpersonal, small-group, public address and mass media.

Conclusion

In this paper I have focused on the dehumanizing and alienating affects of exclusively Eurocentric curriculums and courses on students of colour; explored the marginalizing effects of "ethnic" studies or courses; suggested that members of the academy admit that at present the curriculums guiding institutions of higher learning are Eurocentric; and proposed the notion of designing new courses which are identified as Afrocentric, Asiocentric, Eurocentric , or Latino in nature.

While I have provided proposals only for Afrocentric courses I do believe that courses in Asiocentric and Latino communication should be added to both the undergraduate and graduate curriculums. In this way institutions of higher learning can begin to produce a

higher number of scholars of colour. This would enlarge the pool of scholars who have the world view and tools to build the theories and develop the philosophies which will allow us to understand oral symbolic activity among all people.

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Appendix A

Tentative Course Proposal
AFAM 74
African American Public Discourse

Goals:

Students should understand that the principles of public discourse are culture specific and that the effectiveness of public address can be determined only by taking into account the identity of the speaker, the audience, purpose and context of the speech. Students should understand the principles of public discourse that have been generated from the African American speech community and be able to apply those principles in the appropriate context.

Learning Objectives: Successful completion of the course requires that students demonstrate a through knowledge and understanding of the following:

1. The need to study AFAM oratory.
2. Similarities and differences in Afrocentric and Eurocentric public discourse.
3. The process of systematic inquiry in order to develop a body of evidence pertaining to a specific topic.
4. How to deliver a message using African American techniques.
5. The nature of black dialect.
6. How to conduct a critical analysis
7. Critical listening and language attitude interference.
8. What constitutes evidence in an African American community
9. Be able to use visual aids effectively
10. Various forms of public speaking in the black community including storytelling, poetry recitation, ceremonial, rap, religious, empowerment, and revolutionary
11. Understand the moral and ethical responsibilities of the Afrocentric speaker.
12. Prepare an outline
13. Speak extemporaneously
14. Generate, consume, analyze and evaluation Afrocentric discourse and public discourse aimed at the African community in order to make decisions.

Course Units:
Communication Apprehension Among African American People
The Nature of Afrocentric Oratory
Critical Listening in the Afrocentric Community
Afrocentric Methods of Reasoning
What constitutes knowledge and Evidence in the Afrocentric Community
Delivery and Black Dialect
Audience analysis
Systematic Inquiry

Organizing Ideas	Rap
Ceremonial Speaking	Storytelling
Religious Speaking	Poetic
Vindicative	Empowerment
Revolutionary	

Written Assignments:

An outline will accompany each speech. Critical analysis of a speech outside of class. Speech by an African American speaker or to an African American audience.

Examinations: There will be two major examinations, midterm and final. The tests are objective and will come from lecture notes and the text.

Class Activity:
Approximately 40% of the class time will be devoted to becoming acquainted with theories and principles of Afrocentric public address. The remaining 60% will be devoted to activities which help students develop their Afrocentric public speaking skills.

Performance Activities:
Students will give a minimum of four speeches.

Class Participation:
Class participation includes two components, involvement in class discussion and presence. Each student is expected to be prepared for class discussion each class period and be able to answer and/or ask questions related to the reading. It is imperative that students be present at all class sessions in order that they may participate as both speakers and listeners.

Assignments and Evaluations:	**Credits**	**% of Grade**
Course Core (every student will complete)		
Storytelling	2	10
Ceremonial Speech	2	10
Critical Analysis	2	10
Midterm	2	10
Final	2	10
Class Participation	2	10
total	12	60%

Course Elective Assignments (Students must chose one from each category

Storytelling African Folk tale or Morality tale	1	5
Poetic Black Poetry Presentation or Rap	**1**	**5**
Developmental Religious or Vindicative or	**3**	**15**
Exoneration or Africological	3	15
Survival/Freedom Empowerment or Revolutionary or	**4**	**20**
Each student will complete the following **Critical Analysis of** **African American speech**	2	10
Ceremonial Speech	**2**	**10**
Midterm	2	10
Final Exam	2	10
Total	20	100%

Assignment Descriptions:

Storytelling: Speaker must relate a story of 5-8 minutes. Must have introduction, body, conclusion and moral. Published or personal experience

Ceremonial Speech: 3-5 minutes speech the purpose of which is to mark a moment in history by calling on those who have gone before us to make the moment possible; identifying those in the present who are connected with the moment and; stating plans for the future. Ex. Graduating from college, dedication of a church, birth of a child.

Poetic: Speaker must do a reading 5-7 minutes in length, of published Black poetry or must do 5-7 minutes rap. Speaking time will include introduction and conclusion.

Religious: Speech developed around a religious theme, three main points, introduction, body conclusion. Must be grounded in scripture from any book considered sacred i.e. Bible, Book of Mormon, Holy Koran, Torah. Must include three sources other than the sacred book used. 6-8 minutes

Vindication: Speech seeking to vindicate African Americans from the power dominate myths that seek to invalidate Black people, their experiences and their contributions to the world. 6-8 minutes

Laudatory: Speech designed to celebrate the Afrocentric experience in history, art, science, dance, music, literature etc. 6-8 minutes

Africological: Speech designed to aid in the recovery and reconstruction of the culture and identity of African Americans. Designed to help the audience understand the role of Blacks in the shaping and ordering of the human experience world wide and/or in the U.S. 6-8 minutes

Empowerment: Speech designed to persuade people of all backgrounds to take control of their fates and their futures. This speech moves them to act in their own behalf in order to be free. 6-8 minutes

Revolutionary: Speech designed to persuade people of African descent and all others to change our society in order that all people be free. Changes can be urged in all facets of American life including media, government, art, literature, education, military, etc. 6-8 minutes

Tentative Schedule

Week	Assignment
1	Orientation/ Communication Apprehension/ Assign first speech
2	Nature of Afrocentric oratory/ Black dialect Delivery
3	Speech one Poetic Tradition
4	Assign second speech Storytelling/ Visual Aids/ Introductions and Conclusions
5	Purposes of Afrocentric speech/ Organizing ideas /choosing topics
6	Speech Two poetry or rap
7	Assign third speech ceremonial/ Nature of Evidence and knowledge in Afrocentric community
8	Critical Listening/ Midterm
9	Speech three
10	Assign speech four developmental/ Audience Analysis/ Afrocentric methods of reasoning
11	Assign critical analysis/ Nature of speech community
12	Speech four
13	Assign speech five empowerment-revolutionary persuasive techniques/ types of proof
14	Critical analysis due/ Analysis of speech manuscript Speech conferences
15	Speech Five empowerment/revolutionary
16	Final Exam

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Analysis of one day of programming on Black Entertainment Television
Analysis of one evening of national and local news to determine how blacks are presented
Analysis of blacks in T.V. and print advertisment

Core Assignments (every student)
4 credits 20% of grade

Interview with African American
Analysis of ceremonial nature of AfAm church service

Field Studies of Blacks in Media (Group Project)
6 credits or 30% of grade

Research Projects:

3 credits or 15% of grade for oral presentation
7 credits or 25% of grade for paper

Letter Grade Scale: A = 4.00, A- = 3.75, B+ = 3.5, B = 3.00, B- = 2.75, C+ = 2.5, C = 2.00, C- = 1.75, D+ = 1.00, F = 0.

Examinations: Students will be assessed strictly on the basis of their papers and presentations.

Class Activity: Ninety percent of the class time will be devoted to student activities such as the presentation of papers and discussion of the major concepts. Ten percent of the time will be spent in lecture.

Assessment: Student papers will be assessed using the following criteria. The first tier of criteria would include the proper use of an appropriate style sheet APA, MLA or Turabian and the quality of sources. The second tier of criteria would include critical thinking skills exemplified in the paper writing ability. The student should be able to write an extended original essay with central idea, subordinate points, and supporting evidence with adequate documentation. Furthermore the student should present a paper that is free from serious mechanical errors including spelling, grammar, and paragraphing. The paper should contain an abstract, introduction, body, conclusion, and a list of references.

Course Schedule
Communication 295
African American Studies

Week	Assignment
1	Orientation Demographics of the African American speech community
2	The stages of theory building Ethnocentrism in theories and research
3	Afrocentric communication theory Assignment of Core individual projects
4	Cultural characteristics of the AfAm community
5	Conflict and conflict management in the AfAm community.
6	Language, identity, and membership in a cultural community.
7	Individual Projects Due/ Black dialects
8	Nonverbal communication of the AfAm communicator
9	Understanding of the relationship among theoretical ,living , and popular culture differ in the AfAm community
10.	AfAm ethnic/racial identity :stages of development
11.	Communication in the AfAm family
12.	Male-Female relationships in the AfAm community
13.	AfAm public discourse
14.	Images of AfAm in the media
15	Presentations
16	Presentations

Reading List

Alba, Richard. (1988). Ethnicity and race in the U.S.A.New York, NY: Routledge.

Asante, M. (1993). Malcolm x as cultural hero & other Afrocentric essays. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, Inc.

Bryce-Laporte, R.S. (1989). Emerging perspectives on the black diaspora. New York, NY: University Press of America.

Cummings, M.S. (1983). Teaching the black rhetoric course. Educational Resources and Instructional Clearinghouse, Report, ED 286 183

Gordan, Edmund W. (1985). Social science knowledge production and minority experiences. Journal of Negro Education, 54(2), 117-133.

Hecht, Michael, et al. (1989). An Afro-American perspective on interethnic communication. Communication Monographs, 56(4), 385-410.

Hecht, Michael & Ribeau, Sidney. (1987). A black perspective on interethnic communication effectiveness. Boston, MA: Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 288 230)

Karenga, M. (1992)(rev. ed.). The introduction to black studies. Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press.

Nance, T.A. (November 1989). More than just style and delivery: Recasting public speaking courses for African American students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, 75th, San Francisco, CA. ED 318 041

Ripley, D.W. (1991) (Ed.). My soul looks back,' less I forget: A collection of quotations by people of color. New York: Harper Collins.

Sidney, M. and Price, R.(1992). The birth of Afro-American culture. Boston: Beacon.

Smitherman, G. (1977). Talking and testifying. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Appendix B

Communication 295
African American Communication Seminar
Communication Studies Department

Goals:
Having completed the course students should have an understanding of afrocentricity in communication research, theory, and practices. Students should be to identify the characteristics of Afrocentric communication, understand the Afrocentric speech community and be able to articulate this information in written and oral form.

Texts:

Hecht, M.; Collier, M.; & Ribeau, S. (1993). African American Communication. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

Smitherman, G.(1994). Black Talk:Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Successful completion of the course requires that the students understand and be able to articulate the following in oral and written form .

1. The need to study AfAm communication
2. The nature of the African American speech community
3. The stages of theory building within a field of study and where afrocentric communication theory rests in terms of stages of theory development.
4. The impact of ethnocentrism on theories and research
5. Afrocentric communication theory
6. Functional paradigm in afrocentricity: needs, policy, and action orientations in communication
7. Categorical paradigm in afrocentricity: schemes, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, ableness and themes. in afrocentric communication
8. Etymological paradigm in afrocentricity: language,literature, and oratures
9. Cultural characteristics such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity-femininity.
10. The relationship among language, identity, and membership in a cultural community.
11. An understanding of the relationship among theoretical culture, living culture, and popular culture and how these differ in the AfAm community
12. Conflict and conflict management in the AfAm community.
13. Nonverbal communication of the AfAm communicator
14. AfAm ethnic/racial identity
15. Communication in the AfAm family
16. Male-Female relationships in the AfAm community

15. Communication in the AfAm family
16. Male-Female relationships in the AfAm community

17. AfAm public discourse
18. Images of AfAm in the media

Course Units:

The nature of the African American speech community
The stages of theory building
Ethnocentrism in theories and research
Afrocentric communication theory
Cultural characteristics of the AfAm community
Language, identity, and membership in a cultural community.
Conflict and conflict management in the AfAm community.
Nonverbal communication of the AfAm communicator
AfAm ethnic/racial identity
Communication in the AfAm family
Male-Female relationships in the AfAm community
AfAm public discourse
AfAms in the media

Assignments

Core Assignments (every student) 2 credits 10% of grade

Interview with African American
Analysis of ceremonial nature of AfAm church service

Research Projects:
Paper and Oral Presentation 12 credits or 60 % of grade
2 credits for oral presentation 10 credits for paper

AfAm Family: structure and styles of communication
Black male-female relationships as reported in black publications such as Jet, Ebony, Essence, Black Entrepreneur, and professional journals.
Stages of ethnic identity and nigresence
Non-verbal behaviors of black communicators
Communication and in the black community
Conflict styles among blacks
Black Church as an arena for public discourse
Black Language, dialect, Ebonics, language variations

Field Studies of Blacks in Media (Group Project)
6 credits or 30% of grade
Paper and oral presentation
Every student will participate in one of these projects

Analysis of one week of AfAm television programming on major networks (prime time)